

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 SAN JO 02114 140629Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 AID-05 SCA-01 EB-07 /080 W
-----141602Z 127279 /41

R 132050Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7364
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

UNCLAS SAN JOSE 2114

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS
SUBJECT: THE "NEW REPUBLIC" VESCO/FIGUERES/ODUBER IMBROGLIO

REF: SAN JOSE 2068

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT ODUBER FLATLY DENIES RECEIVING VESCO MONEY FOR 1974 CAMPAIGN. JOSE FIGUERES BEGINS PROMISED COMMENTARY ON "NEW REPUBLIC" INTERVIEW. ASSEMBLY STILL CANNOT FORM QUORUM TO DEBATE ISSUE. EX-PRESIDENT TREJOS DEMANDS ODUBER'S RESIGNATION. POLITICAL OPPOSITION REACTION STILL STRONG AND MEDIA COVERAGE INTENSE AS EVER. END SUMMARY.

2. THE POLITICAL FIRE-STORM OVER JOSE FIGUERES' "NEW REPUBLIC" INTERVIEW CONTINUES UNABATED. IN A FULL-PAGE AD IN MAY 13 DAILY "EXCELSIOR," PRESIDENT ODUBER FIRMLY DENIED RECEIVING IMPROPER CAMPAIGN FINANCING IN 1974. THE PRESIDENT STATED CATEGORICALLY, "IN MY LAST CAMPAIGN, NEITHER MY FINANCE COMMITTEE NOR MY TREASURER NOR ANY OF

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 SAN JO 02114 140629Z

THE PERSONS WORKING FOR ME SOILED THEIR HANDS WITH DIRTY MONEY..." ADDING "...I NEVER RECEIVED ANY CONTRIBUTION FROM MR. VESCO NOR DID I SEEK NOR HE OFFER ONE." ODUBER DISMISSED THE CURRENT CRISIS AS THE WORK OF THOSE INTERESTED IN TURNING THE CAMPAIGN INTO A POLITICAL CARNIVAL SUGGESTING DON PEPE AND "LA NACION" PUBLISHER GUIDO FERNANDEZ WERE TWO OF THE INTERESTED PARTIES.

3. FOR HIS PART, FIGUERES, HAS BEGUN THE SERIES OF ARTICLES COMMENTING ON THE "NEW REPUBLIC" INTERVIEW HE PROMISED IN HIS INITIAL RESPONSE TO THE UPROAR (SAN JOSE 1965). HIS PACE IS LEISURELY, KEEPING UP THE TENSION. IN THE MAY 13 INSTALLMENT HE DISCUSSED THE CIA ACTIVITIES IN THE MID-FIFTIES.

4. THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY STILL HAS NOT FORMED A QUORUM TO PERMIT PLENARY DEBATE ON THE RESOLUTIONS INTRODUCED MAY 10 (SAN JOSE 2043) MANY DEPUTIES ARE NOT PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE AND LACK OF A QUORUM IS A NEAT WAY OF SIDESTEPPING THE PROBLEM. ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT SOLEY BLAMED OPPOSITION LEGISLATORS FOR FAILURE TO REACH A QUORUM MAY 11 AND 12. THE PREVIOUS DAYS, PLN DEPUTIES WERE ABSENT. BUT, MEANWHILE THE PLN LEGISLATIVE CONTINGENT REPORTEDLY HAS DECIDED TO RECOMMEND THAT THE INFLUENCE OF VESCO MONEY IN ALL PARTIES, NOT JUST PLN, BE INVESTIGATED. THIS SENTIMENT HAS BEEN ECHOED BY OTHER LIBERAL MEMBERS IMPLYING

THAT VESCO MONEY WENT TO THE OPPOSITION AS WELL. THE STRATEGY--MAKE THE OPPOSITION BACK OFF FOR FEAR OF HAVING THEIR OWN DIRTY LINEN WASHED IN PUBLIC.

6. IN OTHER PLN REACTION, THE DISSIDENT PATRIOTIC ACTION FACTION MAY 12 ISSUED A NEW STATEMENT ON THE SCANDAL WHICH DECLARED "THE CHARGES OF CORRUPTION MADE BY EX-PRESIDENT FIGUERES' DEMAND URGENT CIVIC ACTION." IT CALLED FOR COSTA RICANS TO EXAMINE THE SITUATION, KEEPING IN MIND THE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 SAN JO 02114 140629Z

HISTORICAL EXAMPLE OF NIXON AND WATERGATE. THE MESSAGE WAS CLEAR-- SHOULD ODUBER STAY IN POWER?

7. THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION HAS RENEWED ITS STRONG ATTACK. FORMER PRESIDENT JOSE JOAQUIN TREJOS FLATELY CALLED FOR G NIEL ODUBER TO RESIGN "FOR THE GOOD OF THE COUNTRY, ITS DEMONCRACY AND ITS PEOPLE." UNITED OPPOSITION PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE RODRIGO CARAZO DECLARED "NOW WE COSTA RICANS KNOW WHY PRESIDENT ODUBER DID NOT EXPEL VESCO IN 1974 NOR IS DOING SO NOW, BECAUSE HE RECOGNIZED, HE RECEIVED VESCO MONEY TO FINANCE HIS CAMPAIGN." CARAZO DEMANDED THE ASSEMBLY NOT PERMIT THE PRESIDENT TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY ON HIS SCHEDULED EUROPEAN TRIP (SAN JOSE 1989) AND SHOULD VICE PRESIDENT GUZMAN MATA ASSUME THE PRESIDENCY IN HIS ABSENCE, THAT GUZMAN EXPEL VESCO. (THERE IS A HITCH--VESCO CANNOT LEAVE THE COUNTRY, VOLUNTARILY OR OTHERWISE, DUE TO A COURT ORDER ISSUED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE RECHNITZER CASE.)

8. MEANWHILE THE SUPREME ELECTION TRIBUNAL ANNOUNCED MAY 13 IT HAD NO EVIDENCE VESCO HAD CONTRIBUTED FUNDS TO ODUBER'S CAMPAIGN, INDICATING, HOWEVER, THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY IT WOULD GET SUCH PROOF IF LAUNDERED MONEY HAD BEEN USED. CONTROLLER GENERAL RAFAEL CHINCHILLA ALSO ANNOUNCED HIS OFFICE IS DEBATING WHETHER TO INVESTIGATE THE ALLEGATION OF VESCO CAMPAIGN FINANCING.

9. MEDIA COVERAGE REMAINS INTENSE. LEADING DAILY "LA NACION" CONTINUES TO PRINT FORCEFUL EDITORIALS ON THE SUBJECT DEMANDING MAY 13 THAT THE POLITICAL PROCESS BE CLEANED UP.

10. COMMENT: WHEN THE STORY FIRST BROKE, FEW LOCAL COMMENTATORS THOUGHT IT WOULD REMAIN FRONT-PAGE NEWS FOR MORE THAN A FEW DAYS. THEY WERE WRONG. THE WAY IT LOOKS NOW IT WILL BE AWHILE BEFORE THINGS START SORTING OUT.
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 SAN JO 02114 140629Z

KILDAY

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ALLEGATIONS, FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS, ELECTION CAMPAIGNS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, OPPOSITION PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 13-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977SANJO02114
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770171-0489
Format: TEL
From: SAN JOSE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770561/aaaacajc.tel
Line Count: 140
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 0ebca494-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 SAN JOSE 2068
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2535023
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE \"NEW REPUBLIC\" VESCO/FIGUERES/ODUBER IMBROGLIO
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS, (FIGUERES, JOSE), (VESCO, ROBERT L)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0ebca494-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009